Interim Report on Mafia Given

By G. MICHAEL HARMON

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — The Mafia Probe Committee released an interim report to the Legislature Thursday that contained no conclusions on the accuracy of a Life magazine article charging organized crime influence in state government.

"It would be premature in the interim report to determine the truth or falsity of any of the allegations," said committee chairman Sen. Adrian Duplantier of New Orleans.

Duplantier said it may be "several months" before the legislative committee completes its work.

The 11-page interim report generally was limited to a review of what the committee has accomplished so far, and plans for the future.

In one new development, however, the report said the committee has contacted U.S. Atty. Gerald Gallinghouse to seek the aid of a Justice Department task force on organized crime.

WORK CLOSELY

"It is hoped that a meeting of the two groups (the committee and the task force) can be arranged soon, to enable us to work closely together on a cooperative basis," the report said.

The report emphasized that the committee investigation was limited to the terms of the resolution, which created the panel to specifically probe organized crime, but the group would not ignore any law violation that might be uncovered.

The report said, "It is possible that during the course of the investigations, either privately or at public hearings, evidence may be developed of inefficiency or mismanagement on the part of state employes, short of criminal activity."

"In this event," the report said, "as soon as practicable after we learn of such information, the committee will direct it to the attention of Mr. W. W. McDougall, commissioner of administration, if it is with respect to employes under his jurisdiction; otherwise, to the appropriate other supervisory person.

POSSIBILITY SEEN

"Furthermore, there is also the possibility that our investigation may discover evidence indicating the possibility that a crime has been committed though not of the nature covered (by the resolution), not related to organized crime influencing or corrupting local and state government."

All such discoveries, the report said, will be turned over to the proper law enforcement agencies.

The report reviewed the testimony of police officials and Gov. John J. McKeithen at its two public hearings, especially citing police testimony that "indicated that while organized crime does exist in certain areas of the state, it does not flourish."

Duplantier said, however, the committee investigators would conduct independent probes of all testimony and would not accept anything on face value.

"All agreed that it is impossible to eliminate crime altogether, but that organized crime can flourish only if law enforcement officials become involved, the report added. "They stated that they knew of no 'overlord' or 'hierarchy' controlling organized crime activities in their respective areas, as is apparently true in other parts of the country."

Duplantier said the committee had made only a "cursory study" of a package of documents presented to the panel by Life writer David Chandler during an informal hearing earlier this month.

Duplantier declined comment on statements by Cicero Sessions, Chandler's attorney, that the documents contained "explosive" information. He also repeated the committee position against releasing the documents.

"If Mr. Chandler and Mr. Sessions really think it will serve the public interest to release those documents I will make copies of them," Duplantier said.

TRANSCRIPT SET

The report said a transcript of all testimony was being prepared and will be released to the public.

The report also said it was confident that the courts would "uphold the right of a state legislature, acting through its duly constituted committee, to conduct investigations and subpoena witnesses, in an effort to develop facts concerning organized crime so that appropriate remedial legislation to combat such criminal activity can be prepared and enacted into law."

Chandler has filed suit seeking to have the committee declared unconstitutional.

Duplantier said Chandler has been subpoenaed to appear at the committee's next public hearing July 14.

"It is hoped that he will appear and that he will testify," Duplantier said.